

Aircraft Shoot-Down Assessment Team (ASDAT)

What is it?

The ASDAT is a dedicated combat assessment and counter-tactics development team imbedded within the Directorate of Training and Doctrine's (DOTD) Tactics Division. Focused on current and evolving aviation threat, the ASDAT is tasked with training and equipping two combat assessment teams for worldwide, no-notice deployments, to assess the combat damage or loss of Army aircraft, determine enemy Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs), and identify aircraft susceptibility and vulnerability trends. The team also coordinates with the test and acquisition community for aircraft combat survivability, and recommends survivability TTPs to the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence (USAACE) and Army Aviation.

What has the ASDAT done?

The ASDAT was formed by the Army G3 as a reaction to a number of aviation combat losses in late 2003. USAACE's ASDAT has deployed numerous times to determine the threat weapons systems used by the enemy, recommend immediate short- and long-term solutions and brief the commanders of deployed aviation units. These recommendations led to a dramatic decrease in aircraft losses and provided the training, acquisition and intelligence communities with invaluable data to support the war effort. As important as the combat damage assessment process is, it is only the start point for this vital data collection effort. The identification of susceptibility and vulnerability trends discovered during combat assessments has lead to a number of recommendations to the USAACE combat developers and individual Program Managers (Table 1). In CONUS, the team's expertise in counter-tactics and threat capabilities make it a key part of the pre-deployment training provided to Aviation Training Exercise (ATX) participants and the professional education training programs at the Aviation Center of Excellence. In the last year alone, ASDAT-provided training was experienced by over 4,000 Aviation community officers and Soldiers. ASDAT also ensures a team member is available every day of the year to respond to Requests For Information (RFI) from deployed units, the intelligence community and program managers via the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNet).

The teams combat data collection experience was key to Army Aviation's participation in the recent Rotorcraft Survivability Study required by the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY09. This study demonstrated the importance of combat data collection and resulted in a number of candidate solutions to aircraft survivability challenges.

To keep the aviation community informed of emerging threats to Army Aviation, threat trends experienced by deployed units and aviation survivability topics, the ASDAT instituted publication of a classified monthly newsletter and a classified weekly aviation threat intelligence summary (INTSUM) to ensure the knowledge ASDAT gains is shared across the aviation community. Both these publications are posted to SIPRNet on the USAACE Portal and on ASDAT's Intellipedia website.

What continued efforts does ASDAT have planned for the future?

The ASDAT continues to support the technical training and Professional Military Education programs at USAACE, as well as training and supporting both deploying and

deployed aviation units. The team will also sustain its efforts to properly archive and disseminate combat damage data to Army platforms collected by the forward deployed elements of the Joint Combat Assessment Team. The ASDAT's mission set puts it at the intersection of the tactical aviation, intelligence, and test and acquisition communities. This unique perspective enables the team to provide the Aviation Enterprise with relevant threat counter-tactics, up-to-date combat damage data and expertise in support of the Aviation training community, as well as a pool of Subject Matter Experts (SME) that are routinely tasked to provide input on current and future Aviation Survivability Equipment Systems and training.

Why is this important to the Army and Army Aviation?

The increased survivability of Army Aviation platforms and personnel is not the result of "black boxes" installed on aircraft. It is the branch's ability to leverage lessons learned (past), threat assessment (present), and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) / Counter-Tactics development (future) to provide the technical and tactical expertise for mission success. The ASDAT's unique mission and makeup is clearly a key enabler for Army Aviation as we progress through the 21st century. The team's input will be important as we continue to prepare for the next fight, or build the next Army Aviation platform.

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